

SANPETE COUNTY (UTAH). COUNTY COMMISSION ^[1520]

MINUTES, 1852#

DESCRIPTION: These minute books record the actions of the county commission (known during the territorial period as the county court), the governing body of the county. The commission is authorized to manage all county business and county property. This includes budgeting, equipment purchasing, and auditing; use of county lands; districting for schools, roads, voting, etc.; taxing, specifically acting as an ex- officio board of equalization; business licensing; arranging for the construction of roads, public buildings, etc.; contracting for services; supervising the conduct and payment of all county personnel; providing for basic health care, public safety, and care of the indigent; canvassing election returns and appointing certain officials; incorporating municipalities; and by the 1980s, planning and zoning. All these activities are noted in the minutes with the day's entries prefaced by date, names of those present, and where and when they met.

Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts relating to the formation and government of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court. This structure was followed by Sanpete County upon its organization on 30 March 1852. With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes. The previous responsibilities were maintained and expanded.

One of the principal activities noted in the minutes is the monitoring of the fiscal health of the county. Claims submitted for the purchase of supplies and services are recorded regularly. By the 1950s, proposed annual departmental budgets are presented. They set the salaries for

county employees. The county commission assessed taxes and served as a board of equalization, adjusting assessments of individual property. The commissioners appointed and oversaw numerous county, district and precinct officials, and were generally responsible for the oversight of county agencies.

The commissioners created school districts and road districts. A major responsibility noted throughout the minutes is the layout of roads and bridges. The commissioners served as canvassers of elections, also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting districts, and assigning polling places. They approved the incorporation of towns. They licensed businesses, beginning with liquor and butcher licenses in the 1860s and expanding to all businesses when so authorized in the 1880s. Commissioners provided for building public buildings such as a jail and a poorhouse. They oversaw the resources of the county, initially allocating timber and water rights; allowing bounties on varmints; and appointing fish and game wardens, bee inspectors, crop pest inspectors, and weed inspectors.

A major addition to county commission functions was made in 1941 when the commission was empowered to provide for the development and zoning of unincorporated areas of the county and to appoint a planning commission. In 1968, Sanpete County began approving subdivision plats, but had no zoning plan or restrictions. In 1980 the county commission appointed a regular planning commission.

The commission provided for the well-being of the county's citizens and recorded the details in these minutes. They financed the care of the incapacitated, indigent and the insane, initially building a "House for Lunatics" in 1867 and a poorhouse in 1895. These were followed later by regular health and welfare boards and in 1971 by membership in a Six County Development Program, a cooperative venture of rural counties to provide health programs. The commission formed districts for schools, irrigation and drainage, and fire control. In 1942 the commission organized a civil defense program which became part of a broader state civil preparedness program in 1974. In 1971, the county established a county recreation department.

ARRANGEMENT: The minutes are arranged chronologically by date of meeting.

RESEARCH NOTE: There is no volume "D". The books note that the letter was skipped when the volumes were initially designated; there is no actual gap in the recording of the minutes.

Given the diversity and extent of the county commission's activities, the minute books should be consulted not only by researchers seeking information on the commission, but by those seeking information on any county agencies, their personnel, or their services to individuals; on private contractors and their plans for work on county projects or private subdivisions; on private businesses operating within the unincorporated county limits; and on private individuals or charitable institutions holding taxable or untaxable property within the county.

Virtually any person living in, or any activity taking place in, unincorporated areas of Sanpete County (up to and including the incorporation or disincorporation of municipalities) was affected by the activities of the county commission and is reflected in the minutes.

RELATED RECORDS: While the minutes summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies recorded the particulars. Thus the other holdings of the county commission and other Sanpete County agencies should be consulted. Series 15778, ORDINANCES, records the laws enacted by the commission and discussed in these minutes.

PROCESSING NOTE: The Sanpete County Clerk as secretary for the Sanpete County Commission should be contacted for recent holdings. These volumes were filmed by the county in 1995; earlier filmings of the same volumes were of poor quality and were discarded. The paper copy was retained by the county. The series was processed by A.C. Cone in June 1996. Film 13851 was cut to remove volumes which belonged to another series. Reel 4 was cut to remove part of volume E which had been filmed in its entirety on another reel.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description	Volume
1	1852, Mar	A
	30#1866, Sep 3	
2	1866, Dec	B
	3#1890, Mar 8	
3	1890, Jun	C
	2#1901, Jan 2	
3	1901, Jan	E
	7#1909, Jan 4	
4	1909, Jan	F
	4#1920, Jul 6	
5	1920, Aug	G
	3#1927, Jun 7	
5	1927, Jun	H
	7#1934, Jan 11	
6	1934, Jan	H
	11#1935, Dec 27	
6	1936, Jan	I
	7#1947, Apr 1	
6	1947, May	J
	6#1958, Dec 29	
7	1959, Jan	J
	6#1971, Mar 2	
7	1971, Apr	K
	6#1988, Dec 27	
7	1989, Jan	L
	3#1992, Nov 10	

